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that our prelates received their ecclesiastical dignity. Know you truly, that the bishops of Ireland have great indignation against us, and that bishop especially who dwells at Armagh, because we are unwilling to obey their ordination, but always wish to be under your dominion. Therefore, as supplicants, we seek your help to advance Gregory to the sacred order of the episcopate; if you are willing to retain any longer that spiritual relationship (parochiam), which for so long a time we have preserved unto you. Farewell." (a)

This Gregory was the last of the Bishops and the first of the Archbishops of Dublin, and died in 1161.\*

4. No appeals appear ever to have been made to Rome from the ancient Irish Church.† The isolated sentence referred to by Dr. Cullen as a canon of St. Patrick—"Si quæ causæ oriuntur in hac insula ad sedem Apostolicam referantur," if it be a genuine canon of St. Patrick, probably referred to his own Apostolic See of Armagh.‡

5. The long sustained dispute between the Irish Church and the Roman Church as to the correct time of celebrating Easter affords, perhaps, the most striking proof that the Popes claimed no authority to settle the question, and the controversy ran so high between the parties (and, observe, we by no means defend the Irish Church in the matter) that the Irish Bishops refused even to hold any communion with those who conformed to the customs of the Church of Rome in this and other matters. Laurentius, a missionary from Rome, who succeeded St. Austin in England about A. D. 603, in a letter (to be found in Bede's history, lib. ii., c. iv.) in which he describes the nature of his reception there, states that "Daganus, a Bishop of Ireland, who has come over to Britain, refused to eat at the same table with us, or even under the same roof."

6. If further evidence were needful, it might be easily supplied from authorities favourable to Rome. For example, in the middle of the 7th century, A. D. 664, Wilfrid, who had passed many years in Italy and France, and was an adherent of the Roman Church, was nominated to the See of York. How was he consecrated? Bede tells us "that of the bishops in Britain and Ireland at that time only one was in communion with Rome." He was a Saxon, not a native of Britain. There were many bishops in both the Irish and British Churches, but (to adopt Wilfrid's own words on that occasion) "Rome did not admit those bishops to communion with her." Wilfrid, therefore, could not receive consecration at their hands, and the consequence was that he went to France to be consecrated there. This nomination of Wilfrid was the result of the Synod of Whitby, in Yorkshire, in which Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne (Archbishop of York),<sup>b</sup> argued in defence of the ancient Irish system, while Wilfrid, then Abbot of Ripon, supported the Roman method. The Synod rejected the inconsistencies of the Irish system, and adopted that which had received the approbation of Rome and most other Churches; but Saint Colman still adhered pertinaciously to what he called "the tradition of the elders," and returned to Ireland, abandoning his bishopric in England rather than yield to the example of Rome (even in a matter in which Rome did not differ from other ancient Apostolic Churches, such as Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch). How could such a thing have been possible if the supreme right of the Church of Rome to regulate all Churches had then been admitted in Ireland, as Dr. Cullen would have us believe has been at all times the case from the age of St. Patrick down to the present day?

7. A still stronger proof, perhaps, might be drawn from the celebrated letter of St. Cummian to Segienus of Iona, written in defence of the Roman computation of Easter, which is written all through in a tone of apology instead of authority, as it certainly would have been if the supremacy of Rome had been at that period, A. D. 634, an admitted doctrine in the Church of Ireland. On the contrary, he remonstrates with them for calling him and those who agreed with him on the subject of the Catholic Pasch, "heretics;"<sup>c</sup> and he pleads with them in favour of his views, not on the authority of Rome, but

\* The original letter is in Latin, and is given, verbatim, in Ussher's works, vol. iv., p. 532. Veterum Epistolarum Hibernicarum Sylloge, No. XL.

† See Dalton's Memoirs of Archbishops of Dublin, p. 45.

‡ It will scarcely, we suppose, be contended that the visit of the delegate from the Campus-Lene could be considered as an appeal, and we are quite prepared to prove that it was not so.

§ Our readers will remember that the hymn of St. Sechnall (Secundinus) distinctly speaks of St. Patrick as the Apostle of Ireland on whom the Church was built as upon Peter:—

"Super quem edificatur,  
Ut Petrum, ecclesiam;  
Cuique apostolatum  
A Deo sortitus es:  
Quem Deus misit, ut Paulum  
Ad gentes apostolus."—(See CATH. LAY. vol. ii., p. 135).

<sup>a</sup> St. Colman was a monk of Iona, and succeeded St. Finan on his death, A. D. 661, in the Bishopric of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island. York had been selected by Pope Gregory for the actual seat of the Archbishopric; but St. Aidan, and his Irish successors in Northumbria, showed their independence of the Roman See by settling themselves on the sea coast, at Holy Island. Yet Dr. Cullen (p. 16) refers to Aidan, Finan, and Colman, as if they were all devoted adherents of Rome! We would strongly recommend Dr. Cullen to study the ecclesiastical history of the venerable Bede, which was completed in 731, before he ventures to write another pastoral on the ancient Church of Ireland.

<sup>b</sup> "Et hoc obsecro diligenter inspicite: ut mihi ignoscatis, vel me dirigatis, verbis vestris vel scriptis fortioribus et certioribus protestationibus intelligendum, si habetis; et ego supplicium gratanter, ut hoc suscipi. Si vero non habetis, alicui, et nolite nos hæreticos vocare."—Veterum Epistolarum Hibernicarum Sylloge. Epis. xi., Ussher's works, vol. iv., p. 427.

of what he calls "the four-fold Apostolic See, Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, all of which agreed in the unity of the Pasch." And, again, he says, "He that curseth his father or his mother, let him die the death! But what can be thought more evil of mother Church than if we say, Rome errs, Jerusalem errs, Alexandria errs, Antioch errs, the whole world errs; the Scots (Irish) and Britons alone are right." Thus clearly putting Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, &c., all on the same footing as Apostolic Sees.

We have not space here to go more fully into this Paschal controversy, but we think the history of it full of instruction, and purpose taking an early opportunity of explaining it more fully to our unlearned readers.

8. A further illustration of this subject may be found in a collection of canons of the Anglo-Saxon Church, about A. D. 700: in which there is one to the following effect:—"That such as have received ordination from those bishops of the Scots (i.e., the Irish) or Britons, who in the matter of Easter and the tonsure are not united to the Catholic Church, must again by imposition of hands be confirmed by a Catholic bishop, &c."<sup>1</sup>

9. Our readers will now, perhaps, be prepared to receive without any great shock the statement of Cardinal Baronius, who, in his Ecclesiastical Annals, plainly asserts that for the latter half of the sixth century "the bishops of Ireland were all schismatics, separated from the Church of Rome."<sup>m</sup> How Dr. Cullen will be able to reconcile such an authority with his present assertion, we shall be very anxious to see.

We pause here for the present, hoping to be able to pursue the subject further, and say a word about St. Columbanus, in our next number.

## HOW ARE WE TO DEAL WITH OUR FRIENDS WHO HAVE BECOME ROMAN CATHOLICS?

In Conversations between two Clergymen of the Church of England, one of whom had seceded to Rome, and there submitted to a second ordination.

### CONVERSATION II.

[NOTE.—The interlocutors are denoted by the letters R and A, which are the initials of *Roma* and *Anglia*.]

(Continued from page 43.)

R. I am astonished to hear you resort to such an argument, as that no one can be certain that he himself or any one else has received holy orders in the Church of Rome; for your own Church sufficiently refutes it. You yourselves have no doubt of the validity of our orders, seeing that you deduce the validity of your own orders from ours, and if one of our priests should unhappily apostatize to you, you do not venture to reordain him. You are, therefore, yourselves our vindication, and your own professed principles sufficiently show the futility of your objection. If we have no orders we could have given none to you.

A. I am not aware that the Church of Rome ever did give orders to us; our orders—that is, the orders of our reformed Church—were received from English (not from foreign) bishops, the validity of whose orders you are forced to acknowledge, from their having been ordained and consecrated by the old English ordinal in use before the Reformation, although you affect to deny the validity of the orders conveyed by the reformed ordinal now in use. This is the only sense in which the bishops, from whom we received our orders, can be called bishops of the Church of Rome; but this is an improper sense, inasmuch as they were really bishops of the Church of England. But I am glad to find that you can appeal to the doctrines and principles of the Church of England as worthy of any attention; and that you can prop up your own uncertainty of the validity of your orders by the fact to which you allude—that we are so certain of their validity as not to re-ordain those priests of your communion who return to the primitive Catholic unity professed in our Church. But how does this avail you? We are certain of the validity of your orders; be it so: what good does this do you, if you are yourselves uncertain of them? What I urge against you is, that, so long as you hold your doctrine of intention, you cannot be certain of your orders. Other people who do not hold that doctrine may be certain of them; nay, your orders may really be valid, although you cannot be certain that they are so. You do not, therefore, in any degree vindicate your doctrine of intention from the charge

of throwing uncertainty upon your orders when you allege that other people, who do not hold that doctrine, are certain enough of them, and receive your priesthood as valid. As well might a hood-winked or blindfolded man vindicate himself from the charge of being uncertain whether a rose placed before him was red or white, by alleging that another, whose eyes were not bandaged, could be certain of its true colour. So long as you blind yourselves with the doctrine of intention, you create a difficulty, which does not really exist, but which, like a bandage over your eyes, must ever keep you in doubt and uncertainty: throw off that bandage (which, however, you cannot do without throwing off, also, your imaginary infallible guide), and then you will see as clearly, and be as certain, of the validity of your orders as we are of ours. Meanwhile, however, I assert that, according to your own principles, you cannot be certain that you have any true priesthood or sacraments in the Church of Rome.

R. But when you talk of our principles, you must not confine yourself to this one principle, that intention is necessary to the validity of the sacraments. You must take all our principles—our whole system of doctrine and discipline—into account. Granting that we cannot know from the outward act only of a minister what his inward intention is, and that, therefore, if we had no other way of knowing we might be uncertain what his intention was, yet, it would not follow that even in this case we would be uncertain whether we have any true priesthood; because we may know this, and we do know it, from other principles and considerations. We know, for instance, to a moral certainty, that it is impossible that all the prelates of the Church should conspire to omit what they know to be essential to ordination. This would be to suppose them under the influence of a diabolical malice; if, without any motive or advantage to themselves, they could combine for the actual damnation of all existing and future Christians, and the very extinction of sacramental grace in the Church. Such a supposition is actually incredible, if not physically impossible. And, moreover, we believe that God will preserve and continue his Church to the end of the world; but the continuance of a true priesthood is necessary to the well-being and continuance of the Church. Therefore, we are as certain as it is possible to be of anything that God's providence will protect His Church from any such dangers, and that we shall always have a true priesthood and sacraments. It follows, therefore, that, according to our own principles, we are absolutely certain that we have true priests and true sacraments, and that the omnipotence of God is pledged by His most sacred word and promise to make good to us these blessings, and to continue them to us without interruption to the end of the world.

A. This does not at all meet my objection; but rather evades the real point of it. I have maintained that, according to two principles, which you admit to be doctrines of the Roman Church (namely, that ordination of priests is a true sacrament, and that intention is necessary to all sacraments), you cannot be certain that you have any true priesthood in your Church. It is no answer to this to appeal to another principle of your theology (that by which you assume yourselves to be the Catholic Church), and to say, that by this principle you are certain that you have priests and sacraments. This is, in fact, to beg the very question at issue. But neither will this principle, even though I should concede it to you, serve your turn. For by it you can only be certain, in general, that there are priests and sacraments in your Church; you cannot be certain that any particular priest whom you have seen ordained is a priest, or any particular sacrament which you have seen administered is a sacrament, unless you should go so far as to assert that God's promises to His Church have pledged His omnipotence (to use your own words) to secure every minister in every administration of the sacraments from the possibility of an erroneous intention; or else, to secure the recipient from receiving a mock sacrament, notwithstanding the priest's wicked intention. If you adopt this last mode of solving the difficulty you abandon your doctrine of intention, and we are so far agreed. If, on the other hand, you prefer the former, then no minister is in any danger of an erroneous intention, nor is it in the power of the most abandoned minister to frame an intention capable of nullifying a sacrament, since the omnipotence of God is pledged to prevent his doing so. And this comes to the same thing; for your whole doctrine of intention is thereby nullified, and all your divines have written about it becomes a waste of their time and subtlety. As to what you said about the impossibility of all the bishops of the Church combining to hinder, by their opposite intentions, the proper effect of the sacraments, this is altogether beside the question. My argument does not require us to imagine any such conspiracy or combination. I have simply said that you cannot be certain of the reality of the orders received by you, because you cannot have certain evidence of the secret mental intention of the individual bishop who ordained you. But your doctrine makes that secret intention essential to the validity of the orders conferred. Therefore, you can have no certainty that either you, yourself, or any other priest, was validly ordained. And as the same uncertainty attaches to every individual priest and bishop in the world, therefore you cannot be certain that there is any validly ordained priest or bishop in the world. This is my argument, and you see it does not suppose any conspiracy or combination of bishops, much less of all the bishops of the Church.

<sup>j</sup> "Inveni scriptum, excommunicandos et de Ecclesia pellendos et anathematizandos eos qui contra statuta canonica, quæstione sedis apostolicæ (Romane) videlicet, Hierosolymitanæ, Antiochenæ, Alexandrinæ ventant, concordantibus his in unitate Pasche."—Sylloge, p. 435.

<sup>k</sup> "Quid autem pravus mentis potest de ecclesia matre, quam si dicamus, Roma errat, Hierosolyma errat, Alexandria errat, Antiochia errat, totus mundus errat; soli tantum Scotti et Britones rectum sapient."—Sylloge, 438.

<sup>l</sup> Labbe and Cossart Concilia, tom vi., p. 1577, Lut. Par. 1671.

<sup>m</sup> See Baronii Annales ad A. D. 566, tom 7, p. 537 and A. D. 604 (tom. 8, p. 195-6 Antw. 1611). The passages are too long to be transcribed here in full, but the following passage is sufficient for our purpose:—"But as for the labours which must have been endured by these priests, few in number as they were, who came as missionaries from Rome, it is almost impossible to form a correct estimate of their number and magnitude; considering that they had not only to work hard by day and night for the conversion of the Angles, an exceedingly numerous people, from the idol worship of their fathers, and to labour to win them over to the true religion, but also to toil night and main for the purpose of extricating the Britons and Scots from their schism, and reconciling them to the Catholic Church."

R. But it is easy to discern from the outward gesture, reverential deportment, and tone of voice of a man, to say nothing of his general character, whether he is sincere or not. A bishop capable of such profanation would soon be detected, and his impiety would manifest itself. Therefore I hold that we can, in all instances, with sufficient certainty, determine whether the sacrament is conferred with true devotion and right intention or not, especially as we know it to be impossible that there should be no validly ordained priest or bishop in the world. Objections such as you are pressing are mere quibbles of logic, fit only for Exeter Hall, or for some of the wild discussions going on in Ireland. They are unworthy of you, and I am surprised that you should employ them, or attribute to them any weight.

A. St. Thomas Aquinas, however, did not think this objection so wild or unworthy of attention; for he states it expressly, and answers it in the only way in which I think it is possible to answer it. He states the objection thus:—"No man can know the intention of another. If, therefore, the intention of the minister be necessary to the perfection of a sacrament, the recipient never can know whether he has received the sacrament, and, therefore, can have no certainty of salvation in the case of those sacraments which are necessary to salvation." And he answers this objection by stating, in the words I have already quoted, that the minister acts in the name of the Church, and expresses the intention of the Church, when he uses the words appointed by the Church; and this is, I think, on the whole, the true answer; although I have admitted that St. Thomas has elsewhere said some things not very consistent with it, and that, in fact, he did maintain your doctrine. But you see his answer to this objection really amounts to this, that he who ministers according to the form prescribed by the Church, which we assume to be in accordance with the institution of Christ, omitting nothing that of necessity is required to conform to Christ's ordinance, does minister a valid sacrament, notwithstanding any secret intention to the contrary. And this is our doctrine; although we would go further, and say, that even an outward expression of a contrary intention could not invalidate the sacrament, so long as the essentials of Christ's institution were observed. And I might also quote many other Roman divines who do not treat this objection as a mere quibble, but labour to answer it, and, moreover, answer it in different ways, showing that it had seriously embarrassed them. Thus, Durandus gives two answers—1. That we must assume the priest to have intention when he pronounces the words of the sacrament; which is as much as to say, that no priest who pronounces those words can have a contrary intention; but how this can be proved he does not tell us. 2. That we may piously believe that God will supply any defect occasioned by the wickedness of a minister; and this is exactly our doctrine. I cannot see what is gained by asserting the absolute necessity of the minister's intention as Durand asserts it, if we are also to believe that God will supply at all times the want of that intention, rather than suffer the faithful recipient to be deprived of the benefits of the sacrament. I deny, therefore, that the objection I have urged is a mere quibble of logic; and I could quote many divines besides those I have named, who have treated it as worthy of serious consideration. It may suffice to mention Catharin, bishop of Minori, who stated this objection in his work, written during the session of the Council of Trent,<sup>1</sup> and I suppose I need not tell you that his reasonings had great weight with many, and have exercised a considerable influence over the opinions of divines, almost to the present day.<sup>2</sup> It is an evidence to me that you cannot fairly meet the logic of my objection, when you affect to represent it as a worthless quibble.

R. Well, I confess it appears so to me; for this is the case—you tell us we are uncertain of our priesthood; yet, you yourselves are so certain of our priesthood that you admit our priests to be true priests. Is not this a manifest inconsistency, and a proof that you do not really believe in your argument?

A. Not at all; for my argument is this—that on your principles you cannot be certain of your priesthood. I may be certain of it, because I do not hold your doctrine of intention; but no person holding that doctrine can be certain that he himself, or any other individual priest, is a priest, or that he, or any other individual, has received any sacrament. This is my argument. You may reply, in general terms, that we cannot suppose that God would suffer His Church to be without a true priesthood and sacraments. I agree with you. It is not necessary to my argument to suppose any such thing, nor do I hold any such thing; because I do not believe that the true Church of God consists of those only who hold your doctrine of intention. What I say is this—that he who holds that doctrine cannot be certain that he himself, or any other individual named, has ever received a true sacrament; and

as you hold the priesthood to be a sacrament, therefore you cannot be certain that you yourself, or any other individuals, though they were ordained before your eyes, have received true orders. You cannot know what passes in the heart of another. You cannot know what secret intention the bishop who ordains you may have. You cannot know whether the priest who baptised you, or whether the priest who baptised the bishop who ordained you, really intended to do what the Church does, or not. Therefore, so long as you hold such intention to be necessary to the validity of your orders, you cannot be certain that you are validly ordained.

R. But you, yourselves, who use this argument, are so certain of the validity of our ordinations that you receive our priests as validly ordained. Why should not we be certain of that of which you are certain? Why should we fall beneath an argument to which you, yourselves, who urge it against us, attach no importance in your own practice?

A. Because you believe in this doctrine of intention, and we do not believe in it. Our argument is this—whoever holds your doctrine of intention cannot be certain that there is any true priest, or any true sacrament in the Church. You do not, in any way, escape from this argument, or vindicate your doctrine of intention, by telling us that we are very inconsistent in admitting the validity of those sacraments and of those orders of which you, yourselves, are uncertain. Let our inconsistency be as great as you please, this will not make you certain that the bishop who ordained you, or the priest who baptised you, intended to do what the Church does. But we are not inconsistent in receiving your ordinations as valid, for this very obvious reason, that we do not believe holy orders to be a sacrament, nor do we believe the secret intention of the minister to be necessary to the validity of a sacrament. We may, therefore, very consistently receive your ordinations as valid; although we believe that no man who holds the doctrine of intention, and who does not shut his eyes to the legitimate consequences of that doctrine, can be certain that there is a valid sacrament or a truly ordained priest in the world. And the inference we draw from this is, not that there is no true priest or valid sacrament, but that your doctrine of intention is untenable and false.

R. But is the evidence afforded by the outward gesture of the bishop, his general character for piety, and the reverence of his manner to pass for nothing? May we not be as certain as we can be of anything, when we observe a man's solemn and reverential demeanour, that he is sincere? May we not be perfectly assured, from our knowledge of his character, that he is incapable of the iniquity of ministering a sacrament with the intention of making it void?

A. I admit that by such considerations you may persuade yourself that the bishop is ministering with true intention; but you cannot know it to be so. The man who desired to make void the sacrament by a secret intention would not be very likely to let it be seen by his outward actions and gesture that such was his purpose. You may have the highest opinion of his piety and probity, and, nevertheless, you cannot be absolutely certain that some powerful temptation, some sudden and overwhelming deception of Satan, may not, on some one occasion, so far have overcome his probity as to induce him to seek to nullify the sacrament he was ministering. And in such a case, when it was his direct purpose to make void the sacrament, his outward gesture and actions would probably be more studiously exact and reverential than if he had no such purpose. He may even have persuaded himself that the particular occasion was such as to justify him. For instance, suppose a bishop to be on the point of ordaining three priests, and suddenly to form a strong opinion that one of them was an immoral man, and unworthy of the sacred office. Suppose that he had already performed all the ceremonies of the office (except the actual words in which the priesthood is conferred) before he had made up his mind against the individual candidate of whom he had conceived suspicions. In such a case you could not have told from his manner that his intention was contrary to the intention of the Church, because he had not formed such an intention until he had said all the prayers of the office; and, as we suppose him to be acting conscientiously and with full persuasion that he was doing his duty, there would be nothing in his outward manner to indicate anything wrong in his ministration of the ordination ceremonies. This possible case proves that you may very easily be deceived, if you have nothing to guide your judgment but the external deportment of the minister of a sacrament, and your knowledge or opinion of his private character. And you ought to bear in mind that my argument is, not that you can in no case have reasons to think it probable that the sacrament is rightly administered, but that you can in no case be certain that the minister of a sacrament has not, at the very moment in which he pronounces the essential words, conceived a secret intention opposed to the intention of the Church.

R. But if the bishop or priest, who has ministered, declares, upon oath, that he did intend, in ministering the sacrament, to do as the Church doth, and if he be a man whose oath we would accept without hesitation on any other subject, are we to refuse his testimony?

A. Recollect, however, how seldom, if ever, you have such testimony. But let us suppose that you have it. It is, after all, only the oath of a person guilty of a great crime (your writers call it sacrilege) that he is not guilty. Would any court of justice in the world give the slightest weight to such an oath? Would not the common sense of mankind rather say that no man can be taken as a witness in his own cause, and that he who had committed a crime which subjected him to great scandal and censure, if not to excommunication, would not hesitate to commit the further crime of denying his guilt, if thereby he could be certain of clearing himself. And in the case supposed, where the question is as to his secret intention, it is impossible that any evidence can be found to contradict his own assertion; for no person, except the man himself, can know what his secret intention was. And this is exactly the objection I urge against your doctrine, which makes the efficacy of the sacraments of Christ depend on the secret intention of man.

R. You have put an extreme case against me, and I answer it by an extreme case. I do not see why we should not give weight to the character of the ministrant, or to his oath, supposing him to have taken his oath. And, therefore, it is not impossible for us to have sufficient evidence—evidence that would be deemed sufficient in any other case—that he intended as the Church intends.

A. But this very defence of your doctrine admits that you cannot, in all cases, be sure of the validity of your sacraments. The probity of every priest is not so certainly known to every individual before whom he ministers as to satisfy each one of them that he is incapable of intending otherwise than the Church intends; neither does every priest make oath to every individual of his congregation that he has not had a wrong intention. Therefore, my argument remains untouched. You can at best have but a probable opinion, as opinion is opposed to certain knowledge, that your ministers intend aright. You found that opinion on the probity of your ministers—in other words, on your opinion of their probity—at least if I understand you aright.

R. What I say is this—that our knowledge of the piety and honesty of an individual priest or bishop who ministers a sacrament ought to have some weight in our judgment, whether or not he is capable of such profanity as ministering with intention to make void the sacrament.

A. In this you agree with the great majority of divines who hold the doctrine of intention. You can have no greater certainty, according to that doctrine, of the validity of your sacraments than you have of the probity of the minister who officiates. Thus Soto<sup>3</sup> says—"When we see men of probity use the matter and form of the Church, we also believe that they have sound and Christian minds when they minister the sacraments." We cannot, therefore, be more certain of their sound and Christian minds than we are of their probity; and, therefore, your certainty of the validity of the sacraments ministered by them cannot rise higher than your certainty of their probity. Am I not, therefore, justified in saying that this doctrine of intention is one of the most vulnerable points in the theology of the Church of Rome? Does it not throw uncertainty over all your sacraments? Does it not render you doubtful of the validity of your very priesthood? Does it not make you uncertain of your salvation? According to your own defence of it, your certainty of the validity of your priesthood and sacraments cannot rise higher than your certainty of the probity and piety of the minister by whom those sacraments are given; and yet your Trent Council pronounces an anathema against those who assert that a minister in mortal sin cannot confer a valid sacrament.<sup>4</sup> You are, therefore, bound to believe that an ungodly priest can confer a valid sacrament, and, nevertheless, your certainty that a valid sacrament is conferred by him depends on your certainty of his probity. For aught you know his ungodliness may consist in his wilful intention to make void the sacrament; and in that case, although, according to the doctrine of the Trent Synod, no mortal sin would invalidate the sacrament, yet that particular sin, of not intending to do what the Church intends, does invalidate it. Therefore, Roman Catholics who hold this school-doctrine of intention are in this dilemma; if they know the minister to be ungodly they cannot be sure that his ungodliness may not take the form of an intention contrary to that of the Church, in which case they must believe the sacrament to be no sacrament; on the other hand, if they believe the minister to be a good and pious man, their certainty that the sacrament ministered by him is a valid sacrament cannot rise higher than their certainty of his probity. In no case, then, can a Roman Catholic, believing the school-doctrine of intention, be absolutely certain that he himself, or any other person in his Church, has received a valid sacrament.

R. If these be your sentiments, my dear friend, I am afraid we must agree to differ. I can see no force in any of your arguments, and nothing that I have said appears to have had any weight with you.

<sup>1</sup> Fleury, Hist. Eccles.—Liv. 143, No. 116.

<sup>2</sup> In 1751, when Courayer published his translation of Father Paul's Hist. of the Council of Trent, the doctrine of Catharin on this subject seems to have been then most generally received; for he says (tom. i. p. 430, note 70)—"Les theologiens estoient alors d. e. a. at the time of the Trent Council) dans des sentimens differens. Mais, quoiqu'ils ne soient pas encore tous d'accord, il semble cependant que presque tout le monde est revenu au sentiment de Catharin." But now it seems the unchangeable Church of Rome has changed its doctrine, and the opposite opinion is that which now prevails.

<sup>3</sup> "Cum videmus homines probos uti formâ et materiâ ecclesiasticis credimus sanas etiam Christianasque habere mentes dum sacramenta ministrant."—In 4 Sent. dist. 1, q. 5, art. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Si quis dixerit ministrum in peccato mortali existentem, non conficere aut conferre sacramentum, anathema sit.—Sess. 7, c. 11.